

**Minutes of The Wayne County Soil & Water
Conservation District Board of Directors**

**Regular Meeting – March 23, 2011
SWCD Office, Lyons, NY, 14489**

Directors:

Steve Brownell
Bill Hammond
Tom Caprilla
Jody Bender
Bob VanLare

Staff:

Lindsey Gerstenslager
Cathy Comfort
Ron Thorn
Terry Reynolds

NRCS:

Bill Jones

FSA:

Krista Bowman

Guest:

Pat VanLare

Call to order @ 9:00am

Secretary's Report:

A MOTION was made to approve the minutes of the February 16th meeting by B. VanLare second by J. Bender; carried.

A MOTION was made to approve the minutes of the March 11th meeting by B. VanLare second by J. Bender; carried.

Treasurer's Report:

A MOTION was made to approve the treasurer's report by B. Hammond seconded by J. Bender; carried.

The BOD took a few moments to review the bills to be paid. B. VanLare asked if we were getting printer ink thru the County (check 7985). L. Gerstenslager explained that we are able to get the County pricing and buy from their vendors, we did run short of ink and the County was able to supply us with some.

A MOTION was made to approve the bill's to be paid for March 2011 by B. Hammond seconded by T. Caprilla; carried.

L. Gerstenslager explained that the FLOWPA contract is in and approved and we are waiting on ok from DEC to spend. She also explained that the current contract expenditures have to be corrected as there are payments incorrectly classified as being paid with FLOWPA money that should not be. B. Hammond expressed his concern of the excess funds that this will leave and how to use it. L. Gerstenslager explained that there are other charges that were not applied to this contract and they will offset these funds.

L. Gerstenslager also stated the she and C. Comfort are working on a better way of tracking grant funds.

L. Gerstenslager confirmed the transfer of funds approved at the January meeting was done.

A quick overview was given to the board that during the WQS it was discovered that the chart of accounts may not be correct. L. Gerstenslager and C. Comfort are looking into this and will be correcting this as well as other bookkeeping errors. All further bookkeeping will follow the guidelines of the NYS Soil and Water Administrative Manual.

L. Gerstenslager stated there has been an error in how the health insurance deductions have been taxed to employees. C. Comfort gave a brief overview of Section 125 and how it applies to employee/employer payroll taxes. A review of our insurance policy is being done and subsequently corrected W-2's may need to be issued.

State funding has come in and can be utilized for training as well as retention of employees. L. Gerstenslager is hoping to have the operational budget in place soon. B. Hammond brought up the bookkeepers assoc in Wayne County and will check with Macedon employee Kim on membership; J. Bender stated there is also a clerk's assoc and she will check with Marion employee Cindy on the guidelines.

NRCS Report

W. Jones gave a quick update and stated that the CSP applications are due today and have to ranked and put into the system. W. Jones also stated that Wayne County had more applications than other watersheds and April will be busy with him and E. Mombourquette both out in the field to review applications with the hope of having CPS done by the end of May. Air quality program (EQIP) due April 1st for the program ending April 15th.

W. Jones stated that he is working with the district to classify AEM tiers 1-3. He is also working with R. Thorn on the ranking.

W. Jones also stated that the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is having a general sign-up. This program contracts thru FSA with assistance from NRCS. As these programs are moving along quickly the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) has been "gathering dust".

W. Jones and L. Gerstenslager spoke about the possibility of a federal shutdown and the on-going discussions to verify if Soil and Water office can continue to be open during this time as this is not a federal building, however, it is rented by the federal government and if a shutdown occurs both NRCS and FSA will be closed. April 8th will bring the update on the federal shutdown possibility.

B. VanLare questioned why the WREP applications are gathering dust with current water situations. W. Jones explained that WREP is different as it affects maintaining and restoration of wetlands.

FSA Report

K. Bowman reported that they have had new software installed which is running slow. K. Bowman is hoping the new software will assist with the CRP that includes winter wheat, barley etc.

In other news K. Bowman stated the DCP signup is moving quickly and that the general CRP that ends April 15th she is not anticipating a large sign-up for.

SWCD Report

An Ag Planning report was given by R. Thorn highlighting the soil group worksheet (SGW) season winding down with approximately 220 being processed this year. R. Thorn showed how the new system for doing these is much more productive than the old system of counting dots, a presentation showing both was shown.

R. Thorn talked about the CNP course that he attended during the WQS and that this was one of the steps in his goal to be a certified. He also has been working on 3 Ag plans trying to get the farm plans a higher ranking and he has a few grazing plans to complete.

T. Reynolds gave an update on the implementation of round 15, with designs either completed or almost complete including heifer barns, barnyard and pond. A design for John and Dan Wolf was completed by a private engineer. These projects are ready to go to bid process and should be advertised soon.

B. VanLare asked if this was the project that J. Wolf has been trying to get thru. T.Reynolds confirmed that it is and hopefully having the design completed by a private engineering firm will help.

B. Hammond asked how the contractors are notified. L. Gerstenslager and T. Reynolds explained that the Ag Non-Source Procurement policy will be used requesting three quotes, state will pay for the lowest quote and the landowner has the option of paying the difference if they want a different contractor.

T. Reynolds said Round 16 is approved with two farms already interested; however, he is trying to hold off until Round 15 is done. L. Gerstenslager agreed that we will be receiving Round 16 monies soon.

L. Gerstenslager gave an update on the current tree sale stating there has been an overwhelming response and time is being tracked more efficiently this year than before so an overall picture of the program can be represented.

Envirothon is moving along though there is still a need for volunteers. L. Gerstenslager stated that this is held April 27th and 28th and this is the last year we will be hosting the event for approximately five years.

L. Gerstenslager updated the board on drainage project stating that the ad will be in the paper Friday with bids to be opened April 12th. These bids will be good for a period of one year. J. Bender asked if towns could bid, L. Gerstenslager confirmed yes.

J. Bender expressed that her drainage district committee would like to know what Soil and Water is doing with the drainage. L. Gerstenslager expressed the need for her and C. Hotto to attend a meeting to explain Soil and Water's position.

District Manager Report

L. Gerstenslager let the board know that the Sate Financial, Program Reports and Performance Measures were accepted by the state and we were approved for funding of \$12,000.

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L. Gerstenslager is working on training plans for board and staff and acknowledging that all of Soil and Water attending the WQS qualifies as an activity event giving us bonus points.

L. Gerstenslager stated that the 2011 annual plan of work is complete and has been sent to L. Travis for approval. The annual plan outlines what Soil and Water is doing and what the agenda is, this will give the community an outline of our objectives and accomplishments are. B. Hammond stated that as a board member he is ok with the plan but wants to make sure staff has had the opportunity to read and have input on their goals. L. Gerstenslager stated that this year the staff has been charged with doing a plan of work and updating this on a monthly basis. L. Gerstenslager also advised that the water quality awareness plan has not been accomplished, though she hopes to have an overview in May.

L. Gerstenslager expressed the need for more lighting and electric at the shop. S. Brownell thought that this had been accomplished last year and agreed to the need for this project. Three quotes will be sought for this project. B. Hammond suggested contacting RG&E for an energy audit to ensure maximum efficiency.

L. Gerstenslager requested the board review her time sheets for approval. The previous secretary/treasurer used to sign off on the district manager's time knowing that there was room for discretion. The board as a whole agreed that they did not think it was necessary for them to approve her time but did acknowledge the need to make them (the board) more approachable to staff.

L. Gerstenslager spoke on bringing back the intern from the Glisten Program and also the need for another part-time or full time employee (Ag implementer) as Ag increases. S. Brownell agreed to the need and asked for the funding of this position to be looked at.

Other Business

Next Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 9:00am at the SWCD Office Conference Room.

A MOTION was made to adjourn at 11:15am by T. Caprilla seconded by B. VanLare; carried.